

The Federal Diary

Tax Collectors' Union Boss Blasts Nixon

By
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The head of the federal tax-collectors' union says the White House is continuing and intensifying a policy of "beating civil servants and deceiving the public in an attempt to cover up badly botched remedies for skyrocketing inflation."

The unusual blast comes from Vincent L. Connery, president of the 40,000 member National Association of Internal Revenue Employees. NAIRE represents six of every 10 workers of the IRS, one of the government's few money-making operations.

Connery says President Nixon has continued unfair and unwise antibureaucrat policies of the Johnson Administration, which "kicked it off in 1965 by opting to run a full-scale war in Asia without making any provision to pay for it by increased taxes. The next step," Connery charged, "was

to set it up so that blacks and poor whites would do the fighting . . ."

The bipartisan attack, sure to stir up controversy within the union and the government, says "President Nixon endorsed this grand strategy in 1969 by continuing to plow up every acre of Indo-China with bombs, borrow and spend untold billions of dollars, and blow every Asian peasant back to the stone age, while seeking 'peace with honor.'"

Connery, who isn't likely to make any future White House guests lists, said "Congress and the housewives of the country were appeased for awhile in that the shortfall of \$100 billion of printing press money used to pay for the war found its way to foreign central banks and did not create excessive pressure on prices until recently."

Now that the war costs are "coming home to roost," Connery says, the President is trying to convince the country he is fighting inflation by federal pay freezes, and edicts to cut back promotions and staff within the civil service.

This was followed up, the union chief says, by "forced retirements" of federal work-

ers, layoffs and promotion bans so that agencies could claim Washington was fighting inflation.

"Since that time," Connery says, "the President has been engaged in a determined effort to deny federal employees the pay raises and promotions to which they are entitled, as well as to decrease the size of the work force through reductions-in-force, freezes, and forced retirements."

"Similar to its grand strategy for executing the war in Indochina, the Nixon administration has waged its war against inflation by making lower-graded federal workers the scapegoat."

Federal unions frequently attack the establishment, and even the White House, but rarely in such hard-hitting terms and on such touchy political issues as the Vietnam war.

Most NAIRE members have yet to see Connery's comments, which are part of a front-page editorial in the union newspaper mailed out this week. But top officers of the organization got a sneak preview of the verbal blast, and now await reader reaction.

Veterans Administration: It appears to be a model for up-with-women according to a new report to the White House and Civil Service Commission.

VA, with 180,000 employees, says that although women make up less than half its work force, they hold 15 per cent of the jobs paying \$15,000 or more. VA's personnel director, Irene Parsons, is the only woman to head a major federal agency hiring and promotion program.